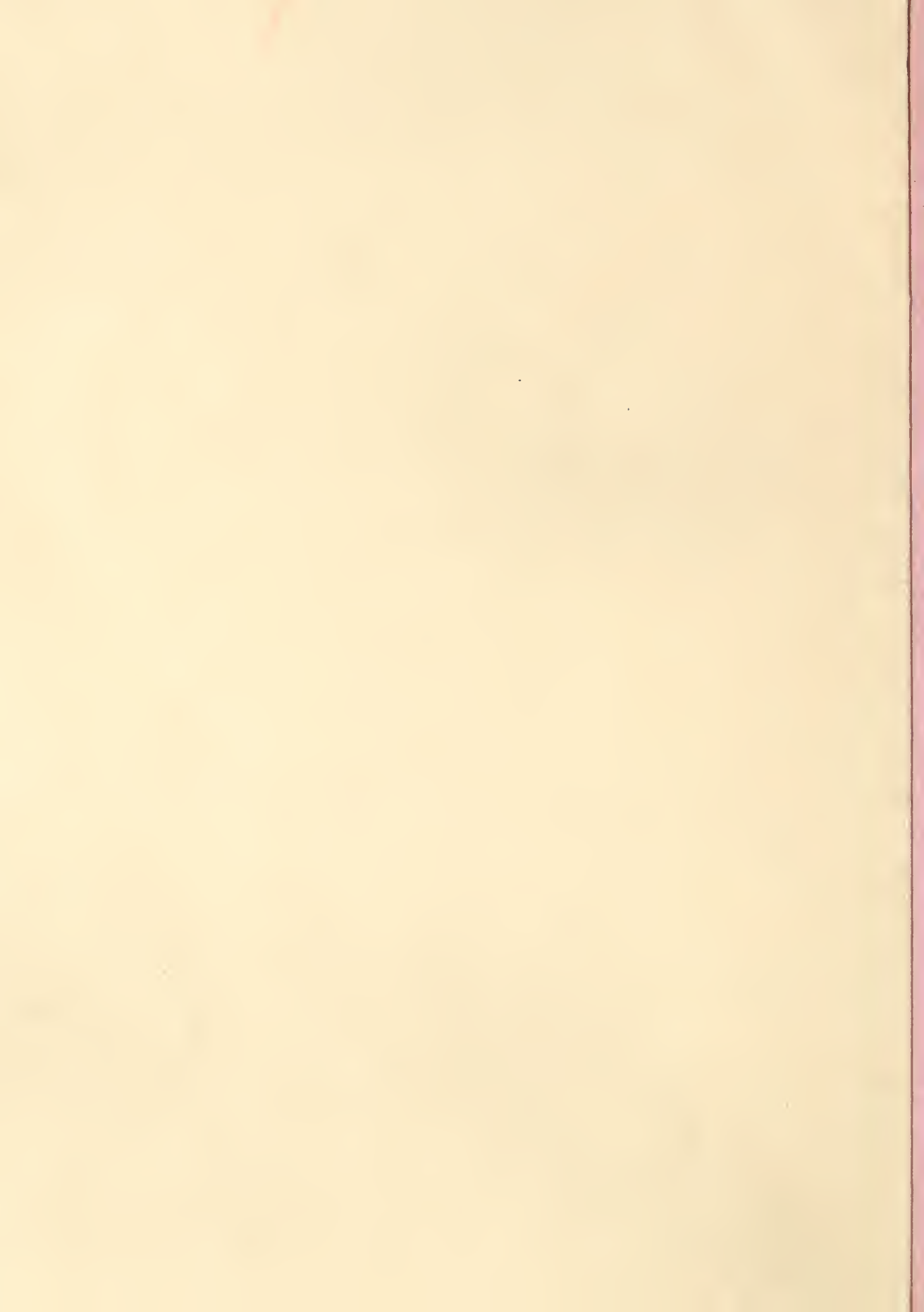


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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, August 20, 1937.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "HOW'LL YOU HAVE YOUR TOMATOES?". Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

The tomato is my subject this broadcast period. My text is from a chapter in Childhood, and the verse a summer one. I shouldn't be surprised if most of you radio listeners could match me with a similar chapter and verse out of your past.

Those were the days when we went out to the garden whenever we felt the urge and picked for ourselves the biggest reddest tomato in sight. Then we wiped off the dust on the underneath side of our dress hems. Or the boys used their shirt sleeves. And we ate our tomatoes "as was", - just as we would an apple. At least with no more preliminary treatment than a little salt. Maybe you always snatched up a salt cellar from the kitchen table on the way out, and sprinkled the tomato as you proceeded with the business of eating.

But we weren't any of us choosy in those days. Tomatoes didn't have to be chilled for us, or covered with Russian or French dressing. We ate tomatoes then because we liked their acid juiciness. We didn't know then that tomatoes are one of our richest sources of vitamin C, and a good source as well of vitamin A.

Such a vast amount of research has been done recently on vitamins that I took time out the other day to check on the latest vitamin information and how it applied to tomatoes. And I'll pass on to you what I found out.

As we said, tomatoes are especially valuable in our diets for their vitamin C. Our bodies do not store this vitamin as they do vitamin A; so we should get some vitamin C food every day.

Well, to my surprise I learned that full grown green tomatoes have practically as much vitamin C as the ripe article. And tomatoes picked green and ripened artificially develop as much vitamin C as if they were sun ripened on the vines. Also you can store tomatoes even as long as 20 days and they won't lose any noticeable amount of vitamin, so long as the tomatoes are firm and don't start to decay.

But - and here's the catch - there's a wide variation in the amount of vitamin C tomatoes have. Of two fresh tomatoes the same size, both sound and red, one may have 3 times the vitamin C of the other one. And of course, there's no way of discovering, from looking at them, which has the more!

Nutrition experts say that the average medium sized fresh tomato has



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enough vitamin C to give a person all he needs for one day. And by medium size, I mean a size that it will take about 4 of, to make a pound.

Heat and oxidation join forces to destroy vitamin C in most fruits and vegetables. But with tomatoes, the acid acts as a sort of shield for the vitamin C, so that you can cook them without seriously affecting the amount of vitamin C. That's what makes tomatoes such a godsend to people, especially in the winter. There's some loss in canning tomatoes as sauce and juice, but these products can still be counted upon to have a valuable amount of vitamin C. And the commercial and home preparations are equally nutritious.

So if tomatoes are selling reasonably during the next few months you may want to can some.

You never can tell what the price of tomatoes will be, - not even a week ahead. The weather decides tomato price even more than it does the price of other vegetables. Because tomatoes are more at the mercy of the elements than most plants. If you have a run of hot dry days, the tomatoes will be sun-scalded and so won't bring high prices. And if you have several days of hard rains the tomatoes will crack, - and then growers can't ask so much for them. I've known prices to jump from \$1.50 to \$2.50 a basket in a few days' time. And even from 50 or 75 cents to \$2.50. Or I've seen them drop from a high to a low in an equally short time.

You just have to watch prices in your own community and then examine the tomatoes carefully to see whether the price is justified.

It's bad business to buy the cheapest basket sight unseen. If a roadside stall is selling tomatoes at \$1.50 and a market nearby is selling them for \$2.00, you'd better examine both before you buy. Maybe the cheaper basket will need so much trimming that it will actually be the more expensive in the long run. Of course if you want your tomatoes to can for juice or sauce and there isn't a lot of waste, the cheaper basket of tomatoes might actually be economical.

Often the more expensive tomatoes are worth the difference in price because of their better flavor and their better condition.

By the way, have you ever tried raw tomato juice? It has a delicious flavor, somewhat different from the juice of cooked tomatoes. It is harder to sieve tomatoes when they are raw, of course. But if you chop them fine first, they aren't so difficult to push thru. If you have a fruit press or even a potato ricer, you might use them instead of the sieve. If you want a clear juice, with no pulp in it, you will have to use cheesecloth to re-strain. Then to season your raw tomato juice I suggest a dash of powdered cloves with the salt and pepper. Or onion juice, lemon juice, and horseradish - using them to season to your taste.

To sum up what we have said about the tomato: It is a fine source of vitamin C. One medium size, fresh red ripe tomato will usually have all the vitamin C you need for the day. But tomatoes vary widely in vitamin C value, so if you were depending upon tomatoes for your vitamin C it would be a good idea to eat more than one. And the weather makes tomato prices zigzag, so that you'd better consider what you will use your tomatoes for, and what condition they are in, as well as what the price is. And raw tomato juice is a delicious drink for summer.

